

July 2, 1996
Vol. 170, No. 27

FOR THE RECORD

More than gold
Olympic ministry materials have already had an impact.
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Point, counter point
Does the Bible allow a woman to be senior pastor? See page 6.

Abortion
A Supreme Court ruling could allow Utah to restore some limits.
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Reminder:
The Recorder's next issue will be dated July 16, since there will be no July 9 issue, in keeping with the Recorder's longstanding summer publication schedule.

Baptist youth hammer at bad housing

By David Winfrey
News Director

COVINGTON—Kentucky Changers painted, prayed, hammered and worshipped last week, while helping eight families have better homes.

The first of this summer's two week-long construction marathons for youth volunteers shows the state Brotherhood Commission event continues to grow in popularity, said coordinator Rick Lucas.

About 85 volunteers worked in Covington last week, he said.

"We've got more churches involved and they're bringing larger groups," he said. "They range from Waynesburg on the east to Smithland on the west."

Another 180 workers are expected for the next project, July 13-20 in Pike County. A total of 265 volunteers would be a 29 percent jump from last year's effort.

Working in six teams, Kentucky Changers roofed, painted and installed vinyl siding and storm windows in eight houses, drawing praise from both homeowners and project coordinators.

"This is my best week of the year," said Pat Crocket, the city of Covington's housing rehabilitation counselor.

"They've just outdone themselves," she said. "We've turned about eight sow's ears into silk purses."

Among those benefiting from the work was Bessie Lynch, 61. Her home, which had been in her husband's family more than 50 years, received new siding, storm windows and gutters. Workers also put new paint on the front woodwork and new masonry work on the entrance to the basement.

"It looks a whole lot better than it did when we started Monday," said Jim Routh, of Sonora, who served as construction team leader.

Lynch said her husband died eight years ago and she never could have afforded the work Kentucky Changers did.

"It is a wonderful thing that they keep God first," she said, noting how the work team at her home started each morning with prayer.

"I'll be missing them when they get through and leave."

Volunteers arrived Saturday, many coming from the Youth Fest '96 evangelism rally in Louisville. Everyone

stayed at the local high school, which served as a combination meal hall, worship chapel and control center for organizing workers and materials.

Saturday and Sunday were spent on building teams, learning skills for the work ahead and worshipping at local churches. Covington congregations also supplied lunches for the teams at the worksites.

Monday, the real work began.

Kentucky Changers teamed up with the city of Covington housing department, which selected homes and supplied materials for the repairs, Lucas said.

"By us providing the labor and volunteers, then they're able to meet the needs of a lot more families."

In the evening, teams return to the school to eat and worship together before going to sleep.

Lucas admitted the pace is akin to a week-long youth lock-up. "Long days and short nights, but you can stand just about anything for a week."

But during the week, volunteers learn a variety of lessons, from teamwork to missions, he added.

"It's exciting to see the kids tackle

□ See Kentucky Changers ..., page 3



KENTUCKY CHANGERS About 85 volunteered last week. ■ LEFT: Bo Steele of Maple Grove Baptist Church in Louisville installs a gutter. ■ RIGHT: Jason Devine (left) of Friendship Baptist Church in Grand Rivers and Derick Helm of Hampton Baptist Church paint.

Cincinnati DJ takes witness to air waves

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

CINCINNATI—He has debated Wiccan witches, invited noted author-apologist Norman Geisler on the air to explain the historical accuracy of Christ and defended two-parent families during a discussion of singer Madonna's unwed pregnancy.

None of this would be considered unusual in Christian circles. But Kevin Harris expresses his views during the midday (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) shift over WKRQ-FM Radio. The pop music outlet ranks among the Queen City's top five radio stations.

Q-102's signal reaches the suburbs of Northern Kentucky, where the unconventional disc jockey also serves as interim youth pastor at Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

"I see my job as a mission field," said Harris, who is married and has an 11-month-old son. "I believe more Christians need to be involved in mainstream media to be a witness and have an effect on the industry for Christ."

"My gift is evangelism, so I function better in a mainstream situation," he added. "I want to be a broadcaster and be excellent in my field, one who happens to be a Christian."

A native of Palestine, Texas, Harris grew up in Norwood Heights Baptist Church, where both of his parents taught Sunday school. He accepted Jesus Christ as savior at age 7.

An accomplished guitarist and singer, he was a youth and music pastor while in college. After moving to Northern Kentucky in 1993, he soon became involved

Sites and subjects abound for Kentucky Baptist getaways

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Retreats come in a wide assortment: family, marriage, prayer, deacons, church staffs, students, seniors, singles, Sunday school, music, missions, youth—and more.

Some might look at a weekend away as frivolous, but Chip Miller is a strong proponent of breaking from the frantic pace of daily life for Bible study, reflection and fellowship.

"All the way back to my days as a youth, I have appreciated retreats," said Miller, director of the Sunday school department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"I personally see tremendous value in simple, quiet getaways. There are so many models and options out there, given the crowdedness of the city and the noise, it's a good spiri-

tual and psychological practice to get away."

After nearly a decade in camp management, Stan Hillman of Camp Joy near Mammoth Cave also has seen the value of retreats. Getting away from telephones and televisions allows participants to establish a new routine, he said.

A Northern Kentucky pastor whose church holds an annual mid-winter deacon retreat finds the weekends a chance to enjoy the kind of quality fellowship that doesn't happen at home.

Jim Abernathy, pastor of Latonia Baptist Church, said he has seen other breakthroughs, such as deacons becoming more sensitive to their identity as ministers.

"In a sense it's a team-building

procedure as we laugh together, share together and get to know each other better," he said. "Our staff also has a process where key leaders will go away for several days to plan key areas of ministry."

Retreats also can be a good way to complete projects that otherwise last for weeks.

Hillman, who moved to Kentucky from Florida in 1993 to manage Camp Joy, said choir retreats are a good option in the fall.

"If they bring Christmas music, they can spend 10 to 12 hours rehearsing," he said. "That's 10 to 12 Wednesday nights they don't have to do it."

Whatever the plans for a retreat, the slower pace of a "getaway" should be reflected in the activity

schedule, Miller advised. As a youth minister he thought every minute had to be planned, he said, but through experience discovered otherwise.

For those not certain how to plan, personnel at the KBC are available to conduct retreats. So are professors from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and other schools around the state.

For conducting your own retreat, Miller said a wealth of literature is available, such as:

■ "How to Conduct a Spiritual Life Retreat," published by the Upper Room in Nashville.

■ "Serendipity" Bible study materials by Lyman Coleman.

■ "Befriending: A Self-Guided Retreat for Busy People" by Joseph Payne, published by Paulist Press.

□ See Sites, topics abound ..., page 7

Moving? See page 4 (0702)

BAPTISTS

In a statement, Disney officials said there was "absolutely no connection" between the criticism and Leo O'Donovan's appointment to its board.

Disney CEO Eisner: Southern Baptist resolution 'extreme'

LOS ANGELES (BP)—Walt Disney Co. CEO Michael Eisner was quoted by the Los Angeles Daily News as saying Southern Baptists "seem to have been off on a tangent this year" in calling for a boycott of Disney.

"We think they're a very small group of the Southern Baptists that took a very extreme position, which we think is foolish," a June 24 article quotes Eisner as saying.

Disney, which built a reputation for

providing family-centered entertainment, has come under growing criticism from conservative groups, including Southern Baptists and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, because of the firm's attitudes toward gays and the content of films distributed by some subsidiaries.

Eisner's comments are his first public response since messengers to the annual meeting asked Southern Baptists to reconsider attending Disney theme parks and purchasing Disney

products—and to boycott Disney if it continues an "anti-Christian and anti-family trend."

In response to Eisner, Bill Merrell, vice president for convention relations for the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee said, "Traditional family values are neither, as Mr. Eisner suggests, a 'tangent' or an 'extreme.'"

In a related story, Disney recently named to its board of directors Leo O'Donovan, a Jesuit priest and presi-

dent of Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

But in a statement, the company said there was "absolutely no connection" between O'Donovan's appointment and the criticism.

O'Donovan said he viewed his appointment to the board as "an important opportunity to influence and help one of the world's largest communications companies."

With additional reporting by Religious News Service.

ATS releases Southwestern Seminary early from probation

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has been released from two years' probation by its major accrediting agency seven months early.

The accrediting commission of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada voted in May to remove the seminary from probation and reaffirm its accreditation, ATS Associate Director Dan Aleshire wrote in a June 14 letter to Southwestern President Ken Hemphill.

ATS placed the seminary on probation—its most serious sanction short

of withdrawing accreditation—because of trustee actions related to the firing of former president Russell Dilday in March 1994.

Dilday was fired by conservative trustees who said he was too sympathetic to moderate Southern Baptists and was blocking conservative reforms at the largest of the Southern Baptist Convention's six seminaries.

While trustees had the right to fire Dilday, the accrediting agency found they failed to follow school policies in evaluating the president's performance and the election and promotion of faculty. Trustees also failed to consider all the school's constituents in their actions and failed to preserve the school's integrity and academic free-

dom from inappropriate interference, the probation finding said.

The accrediting agency will continue to monitor the seminary to ensure that concerns related to accreditation continue to be addressed, Aleshire wrote.

The agency will make a focused visit in the spring of 1998 to examine progress, the letter said. The seminary will also be required to report to ATS by April 15, 1997, relative to criteria that were considered in the action to remove probation.

Hemphill hailed the agency's decision to release the seminary from probation. "We're ready to move to the future," he said. "We feel progress has been made in dispelling a lot of doubt,

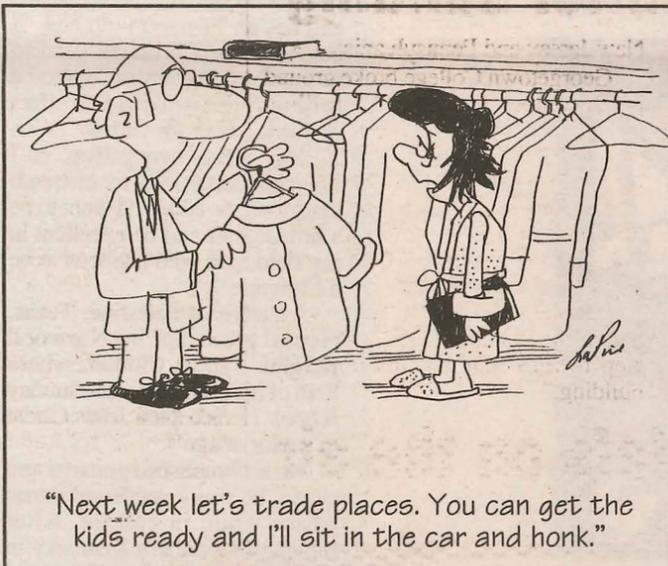
suspicion and misunderstanding that existed."

In a telephone interview, Aleshire said it is not unusual for the accrediting agency to remove a school from probation before the end of the probation period.

While not as serious as withdrawal of accreditation, probation can hinder a school's ability to attract students and financial support.

Full-time enrollment was estimated at 2,805 for the 1995-96 academic year, according to a report at the recent Southern Baptist Convention, 8 percent under the 3,034 enrolled in 1993-94.

With additional reporting by Jim Jones



Campers on Mission hosts 25th annual rally

By Tim Nicholas

GREENWOOD, Miss. (BP)—More than 560 people with about 250 recreational vehicles met June 18-21 in Greenwood, Miss., for the 25th annual National Campers on Mission Rally.

Participants swapped stories about mission work, ate barbecue and catfish, took classes in such disparate subjects as juggling and developing a golf ministry, and enjoyed the company of people who love to camp and do ministry at the same time.

In a campground setting where people are relaxed and friendly, "there's hardly a bobble between talking about the natural and supernatural

of life," said speaker John McBride, director of missions for Shelby County, Tenn., and one of the dreamers who developed Campers on Mission 25 years ago.

Joel Land, associate director of the Baptist Home Mission Board's special ministries department, said the American Bible Society told him Campers on Mission distribute more Scripture than any group they work with.

Among the campers was Charles Mitchell, a retired railroad worker who organized a COM chapter in Indiana in 1980. Mitchell recently directed the volunteer project to build student housing at Clear Creek Bible College.

Mitchell said he fell off a ladder a few years back while on a mission trip

to build a pastorium in Shelbyville.

More than a year later, Mitchell's headaches got so bad his doctor sent him for X-rays. He had fractured his neck—a hangman's break. "Don't move," he said the doctor told him. "You're supposed to be paralyzed from the neck down."

The rally was just a stopping place for many. Charles and Betty Peoples of Jacksonville, Fla., were on their way to Cutbank, Mont., with five other couples to spend three months helping revitalize a Baptist church. They will be leading in revivals, doing day camps and gathering surveys, he said.

The 1997 National Campers on Mission Rally will be June 10-13 at Hutchinson, Kan.

Olympic materials already producing results

By David Winfrey
News Director

ATLANTA (BP)—The Olympic flame has yet to reach Atlanta, but Southern Baptist ministry organizers already are fired up about the results they're seeing.

Producers of Christian witnessing materials for the games predict thousands of Olympic fans in Atlanta and elsewhere could become Christians via sports guides and witnessing pins.

Already 145 response cards from the Olympic pocket guides have been mailed to the Home Mission Board, said Jack Smith of the board's personal evangelism department.

The guides list previous Olympic records and winners plus a six-page explanation of Christianity.

Of the responses, 65 are from

people who became Christians after reading the guide, Smith said. "It's about the easiest witnessing tool I have found to share," he said. "Nobody turns them down."

About 5 million pocket guides have been produced for Christians to use during the games, July 19-Aug. 4.

"We thought we were going to produce a little piece to use in Atlanta," said Toby Frost of the board's mass evangelism department.

"The pocket guide has been sent to over 200 denominations in over 40 countries."

In addition to English, the guides are available in Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, French and Arabic.

The guides and witnessing pins were produced for Atlanta International Ministries '96, Southern Baptists' ministry effort during the

Olympics and Paralympics. In addition to being used near game venues, AIM '96 staff promote the guide and pin as a bridge for churches everywhere to reach their communities this summer.

"The sky's the limit," Frost said. "The Assembly of God churches in Atlanta are even putting them in all the sports bars."

Smith said his office is prepared for 10,000 mailed-in responses to the guides, "and it could exceed that. I fully expect 30 percent of those to be professions of faith."

Frost said he initially hoped 100,000 witnessing pins might be given out during the games. Instead about 300,000 pins already have been ordered. The lapel pins include the "More Than Gold" phrase and five colored stars that pin traders can use to explain the plan of salvation.

FMB sending language help

ATLANTA (BP)—Foreign athletes and other world travelers in Atlanta during the Olympics will be delighted to meet at least some Americans who know their customs and speak their language.

Up to 80 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries will participate in evangelistic efforts at the games.

The missionaries speak not only such common languages as Spanish and French, but also obscure, tongue-twisting languages such as Shona, Ndebele, Tagalog and Isithosa. Those languages represent some of the 336 ethnic people groups to whom the Foreign Mission Board relates around the world.



Kentucky Changers hammer bad housing

Continued from page 1

things that are bigger than anything they ever thought they could do and get pumped up about how God uses them to minister to others."

Volunteer Bo Steele, 16, of Louisville, returned to Kentucky Changers after working in Covington last year.

He said he prefers the working format of this event to church camps he has attended.

"At camp you learn more about God," said Steele, a member of Maple Grove Baptist Church. "But here you can show how God's working through you."

Lucas said the goal of Kentucky Changers is to bring missions closer to home.

"What we're trying to get across to the kids is that they don't have to wait until they're an adult to go on missions for Christ," he said.

Kentucky Changers pay \$135 to participate in the program, which shows their dedication, said Russell Cole, minister of youth for Maple Grove Baptist.

"I think it helps them become more aware of people who are less fortunate in their own neighborhood," he said.

Lucas agreed that Kentucky Changers projects often have long-range effects on volunteers.



HELPING HAND ■ Above: Bessie Lynch was among those receiving assistance from Kentucky Changers. ■ Right: Rick Muchewicz of Kelly Baptist Church in Hopkinsville and Ginger Phinney of Crab Orchard Baptist Church paint and scrape trim at another house.

"A number of them go back and start looking at new projects that they can do in their own community," he said.

This year should be no different, he added. "I really think these kids are not going to be content to sit on the back pew when they go back to their churches."

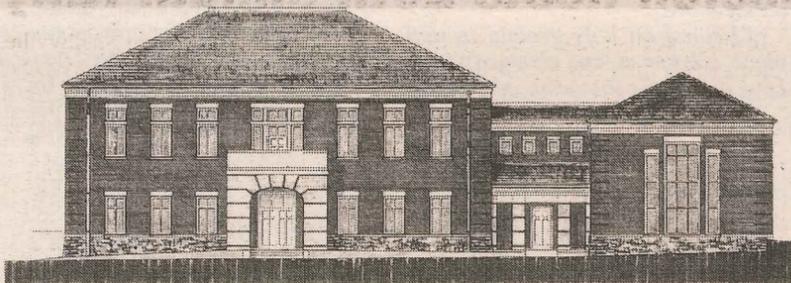
Mike Morgan, who brought volun-

teers from four western Kentucky churches, said the most important lesson Kentucky Changers learn is how to show God's love.

"They're giving back a little bit to Christ of what he's given them" said Morgan, of First Baptist Church of Smithland. "It kind of restores your faith in young people when you work with them like that."



Georgetown College gets \$1 million donation for building



ARTIST'S RENDERING The \$2.2 million Anne Wright Wilson Fine Arts Building, scheduled to be completed in the fall of 1996.

Georgetown College will name its new fine arts building for Anne Wright Wilson, wife of Robert Wilson, a 1962 graduate and vice chairman of Johnson & Johnson.

The naming follows a \$1 million gift from Wilson for the building, due to be completed in the fall of 1996.

Wilson is a charter member of the Georgetown College Foundation Board and will serve as co-chair of the school's upcoming capital campaign.

Mrs. Wilson is an architectural and interior design consultant for firms in

New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Georgetown College broke ground in December for the \$2.2 million project. The 14,300-square-foot structure will be the first new academic building on campus in 25 years.

In addition to classrooms, studios and an outdoor sculpture area, the building will feature one of the largest galleries in Central Kentucky.

President William Crouch Jr. hailed the donation as a "significant step toward funding this important building."

IN THE LOOP Northern Kentucky radio personality Kevin Harris meets all kinds of people in his work with WKRQ. Even when interviewing celebrities like Kato Kaelin, Harris attempts to present the spiritual side of issues.

Cincinnati DJ unafraid to take Christian beliefs on the air

Continued from page 1

with Fort Mitchell's youth group.

Playing guitar and sometimes teaching, he also acted as the DJ for various youth parties. When the former youth pastor departed last October, Harris was the natural candidate to temporarily fill the position, said Pastor Harry Rowland.

"He relates real well with the kids," the pastor said, pointing to a 20 percent rise in attendance. "They say they can tell he cares about them. He's able to relate to them because he knows some of the music and the culture. He doesn't necessarily agree with it, but he knows it."

Although he has teenage listeners, particularly during the summer, WKRQ primarily aims at adults ages 18-34.

Regardless of age, listeners are more attuned to Billy Ocean and Traci Chapman than contemporary Christian groups like DC Talk.

That suits Harris. He has worked for contemporary Christian stations over the years, but he prefers the opportunity to spread the gospel in secular arenas.

At his first job in Tyler, Texas, he organized a Christian music program for a pop station. That provided the impetus which helped him lobby for more secular air play of Christian artists like Jars of Clay.

"When I saw people like Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith, I knew (contemporary Christian music) was going to happen and be used by God to reach people who wouldn't listen to Christian radio," he said.

"I've seen a tremendous effect on my co-workers and the audience as they listen to these artists and consider spiritual things."

His listeners hear a Christian message from more than music. Harris' reputation has earned him invitations to offer an alternative voice when WKRQ's morning show schedules controversial guests.

In the past year, he faced off against a pair of Wiccan witches and against two UFO experts who claimed that aliens would be humankind's salvation.

One witch told him, "You sound just like Josh McDowell." His reply: "I'll take that as a compliment."

Harris also stirs the phone lines by asking such controversial questions as what people thought of Madonna's pregnancy and why men cheat on their wives.

After hearing Harris quote C.S. Lewis while battling callers over the latter topic, Northern Kentucky University chemistry professor Wheeler Conover became a regular listener.

"What makes him so believable is that he's willing not to bury his head in the Christian community's sand," said the member of Highland Hills Baptist Church in Fort Thomas. "We can't listen to Christian radio and go to Christian concerts all the time. There's a world out there."

With five lines ringing steadily during call-ins, the announcer can't spend too much time talking to an individual. But occasionally he will talk to them off the air or call back later to share the gospel.

"I try to let it be an outflow of who I am in Christ," Harris explained. "I feel my convictions from the Holy Spirit often play a role in what I say. I can't preach, but God would certainly have me be positive."



WESTERN RECORDER

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*Earnestly contend for the
faith which was once for
all delivered to the
saints.—Jude 3*

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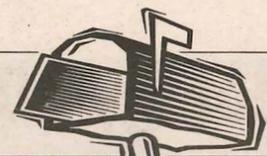
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BAPTIST FORUM

Confess and repent

Jesus told the hypocrites, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:9). The same is increasingly true in many churches today.

The sin-fueled American humanistic culture is spilling over into the churches. The practices, habits and traditions of the doomed culture are becoming the practices, habits and tradi-

Called to repentance

Whenever I am asked about our trip to Russia, I reply, "It was a life-changing experience."

I don't believe I will ever be the same again. You may ask, "Why?" My simple reply will be that I have begun to see the world differently, recognizing that it is my Father's world which he is seeking to redeem. Seeing the world as my Father's, I am now gaining new insights into what the church is called to be. My mind is changing. I am repenting.

Someone asked Dennis Adams if he saw anyone saved in Russia. His reply was pregnant with meaning: "I saw 15 Americans saved."

How were we saved? Our eyes were opened to see the world as a place filled with God's saving grace. We were placed in strategic places for the sake of the kingdom, and we discovered that when you are willing to be pushed outside your comfort zone for the sake of the kingdom, there is an awareness that God is using you in ways you never imagined. We were called upon to change our minds and see God at work in his world. We responded to the call to repent.

Jesus came proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God

tions of a large number of church members.

Because of the slime of the surrounding humanistic culture, there is an active rejection of the clear teachings of the Bible on matters of morals and doctrine. Many church members say, "I believe the Bible," only to excuse themselves from its moral precepts by saying, "It's a matter of interpretation, or, 'It's ambiguous.'" Then they proceed to hack the Bible to pieces with opinions from the decadent culture.

As Peter said, some things in the Bible are "hard to be understood," but the moral standards and doctrines for living the Christian life are clearly stated and easy to understand. Those standards need no interpretation, and they

has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:14). In Klintzy, we witnessed a people of faith living out this great expectation. They saw the world differently, and the power of God present in them called us to repentance.

I wondered aloud how the church in Klintzy, facing so many obstacles, can be filled with such hope and power. Yet, with all of our advantages, we seem to have experienced very little awareness of this power and hope as the church. Truthfully,

we can do anything we set our hearts to do,

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

but we have yet to determine the treasure of our hearts. Our only hope is to respond to the call to repentance, to change our minds, to declare new priorities and to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Mark McClure has graciously captured this epiphany of repentance in poetic language. I have received his permission to print his poem. It describes the new sight that repentance brings.

"I saw the footprints of God in that place, and stood on Holy ground. A richness of earth not seen before, seeds eager to feel the sun."

"I saw the reflections of Jesus' face, in joy, and in love, and anguish."

Fond memories

"It is the prerogative of old age to reminisce." I hope great old friends will forgive my repeating my memories of other years.

Brooks Hays was an esteemed former lay-president of the Southern Baptist Convention and long-time noted Congressman from Arkansas. He was finally defeated at the polls largely because the then Governor Faubus convinced enough Arkansas voters that Hays was too liberal on the race question. President Kennedy

promptly appointed Hays head of his White House staff and people often referred to him as "Assistant President."

After retirement Brooks Hays used his considerable influence personally to invite and conduct a number of Baptist-Catholic dialogues across the South. As a Lexington pastor I participated in the one in Louisville.

A few years later I was state Bap-

tist executive secretary when Roman Catholic Archbishop McDonough asked me to join with him in co-sponsoring a two-day Kentucky Baptist-Catholic dialogue retreat, with 30 leaders chosen from each body, billeted as roommates. We agreed in advance not to "grind any axes"—to take no actions. Just have fellowship and open discussions—perhaps mostly to learn from each other "that neither had horns."

I asked my Administrative Committee if they would support my recommending the matter to our full, large Executive Board. My long-time solid friend, Chester Badgett, strongly objected to the proposal. Chester is a man of deep convictions, strong opinions, strong-willed and a powerful debater.

"I'll fight it," he said. "I'll speak and vote against it when the full Board meets." I knew he might win. He had great influence. Still has.

Well, when the committee pre-

are not ambiguous. It's just a matter of surrendering to God and living the Christian life the Bible teaches.

Some church members love the decadent culture because they have never been saved. They need to be born again. Others dabble in the amoral culture because they are immature Christians who will not let themselves grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

Most people don't like to be told to confess and repent. But contrite confession and repentance, one person at a time, is the only thing that will turn the churches away from the sin-cursed humanistic culture and back to God.

William R. Hagan
Taylorsville

Innocence mixed with bitter tears, as time played out divine plans.

"I smelled the breath of God in that place, and felt its warmth on my neck. As if he followed close behind, yet my way was prepared before me. I felt the tears of God in that place, cool upon my lips."

"Wellsprings of joy and sadness converged, until there were no boundaries. I heard the voice of God in that place, booming machines and innocent songs of praise."

"I saw the face of God reflected in theirs, chiseled and scarred, forged by pain and labor, strengthened by faith."

"I saw the light of God in that place, driving darkness from corners never seen. One believer, called to serve another, yet the servant helped all the more."

"I stood on holy ground in that place, consumed, and changed somehow, amidst the footprints of God."

It is my prayer that someday some pilgrim among us will be inspired to describe the presence of God with us using such language. Is it time for us to repent? May our Father open our eyes so we may see a world being transformed by his grace, and may we experience transformation by the renewing of our minds

Jamie Broome, pastor
Immanuel Baptist Church
Paducah

sented the matter to the Board, I was asked to speak and answer questions. Chester was seated right in front of the rostrum. I could see he was ready for something. I finished comments and sat down right by my old friend. Though there was healthy discussion, questions and answers, Chester had not said a word. I had watched him in surprise out of the corner of my eye. He stared straight ahead.

Finally the standing vote. My friend stood up promptly with the affirmative. Flabbergasted, I stood up by him: "Chester, what in the world?"

He turned and in his powerful voice right in my face said: "Shut up, I can change my mind."

I thought of that old saying: "Wise people can change their minds. Fools never do." As I recall, Chester attended and was a lively participant in the dialogue held at Cedarmore Assembly.

Franklin Owen, former KBC executive secretary-treasurer, is writing this column while Bill Marshall is in Russia.



FAMILY FORUM

Church, singles need each other

By Harry Rowland

How sensitive are churches to the needs of singles? Not very, according to Barna Research Group. Only 16 percent of church members surveyed said churches are sensitive to the needs of singles.

While 38 percent of Baptist adults are single, Baptist singles tend to be less active in church than Baptist adults in general. Moreover, while singles are still one of the fastest growing segments of society, they are not being assimilated into churches at anywhere near the same rate. To arrest this trend, churches must have appropriate strategies for reaching singles.

Churches should stretch their vision to include reaching singles. Too many church leaders subconsciously believe that the church has little to offer singles. The reason often is a distorted view of singles. Churches can be guilty of buying the lie that singles are party-going, relationship-seeking, irresponsible and sexually-frustrated people who have little desire for things spiritual. Reality is that singleness, like marriage, is a day-by-day growth process, filled with ups and downs, challenges, tough times and good times. The church has much to offer singles as they address universal life issues.

Churches should develop an appropriate single's ministry style. Too many churches employ a philosophy of ministry that tries to fit singles into the married adult programs. This philosophy states that whatever organization the church now has is adequate—any new person should be able to fit into what is already here.

An "awareness-acceptance" philosophy is more appropriate for reaching singles. This style accepts singles as they come rather than the way the church may be more comfortable with them coming. Singles come to church in search of God's presence in their lives. They remain in church because of a caring spirit. A ministry that models humility, forgiveness, acceptance and the ability to listen will find itself enriched by the talents, energies and lives of dynamic singles.

Harry Rowland is pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

Send your questions about children, teens, marriage, singles or aging to "Family Forum," Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253.

HE SAID/SHE SAID

She said it was time for a family vacation without any responsibility for writing. He said (in a rare display of male wisdom) she could have the week off. The column will return in the next issue, July 16.

Whistling while we worship

When my husband went to pick up our youngest son after church last week, he found him interrogating his Sunday school teacher.

The second graders are learning the church creeds, and Tyler is a little confused. "How come I can say 'hell' in church, but not on the playground?" he was asking.

Tyler, my always-pushing-the-limits child, likes to know exactly where the lines are so he can wave as he skips past them. He's not a bad child; he's just not one to accept rules without questioning their necessity.

When he was 4 years old, he accompanied us to the church's majestic Easter service, where he showed off his new skill by whistling to the hymns with great emphasis.

I'm glad Tyler feels comfortable questioning and whistling in church. And I hope that, as he grows older, the church will be a place where he can come to express joy and sorrow, frustration and outrage.

Too often the places where we worship are places where we feel a need to be polite and reserved. We spend six days a week expressing ourselves honestly—shouting, crying, giggling, swearing—and one day acting as if we hope God doesn't remember what we are really like.

We sit quietly and primly, talk in hushed tones, and wear plastic smiles. And then we wonder why we get so little out of the experience.

If we want our houses of worship truly to be places where we connect with God, we have to be willing to be honest about who we are and where we struggle.

A friend of mine, a recovering alcoholic, once observed that AA meetings should be the model for church services. We should all walk in admitting our problems, acknowledging our struggles and asking for the support of fellow journeyers.

Sadly we often feel—or are made to feel—like we have to have our act together before we walk in the door of a sanctuary.

Life is tough. It is hard to raise children, deal with work stresses and find enough money to pay the bills, let alone cope with unexpected illnesses or other traumas. It is difficult to act with integrity, to care about others, to be patient in a fast-paced world.

Where we go to meet God should be a place to bring all of these concerns. It should be a place to deal with the messiness of life.

During Jesus' ministry, well-meaning disciples tried to protect him from the children who flocked to him. I imagine they suspected that the children had dirty hands, would ask embarrassing questions and might do such immature things as whistle.

When Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me," he surprised the adults who thought he would have no time for such encounters.

As I watch my son Tyler worship God in his own way and be accepted in our church, I am grateful. He is growing up in an atmosphere that will allow him to know God honestly.

Dale Hanson Bourke
Religion News Service

Take this week's Theology 101 pop quiz

Here's a pop quiz: Where in the Bible do we learn that "God helps those who help themselves?"

Stumped? It's a trick question. Nowhere does the Bible assert that "God helps those who help themselves." That statement was written by Benjamin Franklin in "Poor Richard's Almanac," paraphrasing similar statements by Greek philosophers.

However, a recent poll by the Barna Research Group found that 80 percent of "born-again" Christians in the United States believe the Bible teaches this early American proverb.

The poll also found that nearly half of the nation's "born-again" Christians believe Satan is not a living being but merely a symbol of evil.

Overall, the survey questioned people about eight biblical statements traditionally affirmed by evangelical Christian churches through the ages. Only 20 percent of the "born-again" Christians surveyed correctly identified the biblical positions on each of the eight statements.

Keep in mind, this is not taking into account what non-Christians said or the responses of those who de-

scribe themselves as Christians but could not be classified as "born-again."

So what does all this research mean?

First, it means people can say they believe every word of the Bible without having read it thoroughly. It is imperative that our churches ask people not only to believe the Bible but to read it and understand it.

Second, it means Kentucky Baptists' historical emphasis on the importance of Sunday school sets us apart even from other evangelical churches. There is no substitute for regular attendance in a Sunday school class where the Bible is taught.

Third, it means the church must find innovative ways to marry the sometimes competing demands for sound teaching and user-friendly worship and programming. We must not be forced into a choice between one or the other. User-friendly churches without sound doctrine will produce believers who don't know what they believe. Doctrinally sound churches that aren't user friendly won't last long enough to produce much of anything.

— Mark Wingfield

EDITORIALS

Parochial students don't need public buses

Unnoticed by most Kentuckians, our state government has committed a hit-and-run violation of Baptists' historic understanding of the separation of church and state. The state of Kentucky is back in the business of funding transportation for parochial school children.

Nineteen counties have applied for \$2.11 million in state funds to reimburse expenses for hauling students to private and parochial schools in the academic year just ended. The funds were allocated by the governor and the General Assembly.

After a 1994 ruling by the Kentucky Supreme Court struck down Jefferson County's direct subsidy to Catholic schools, Kentucky's counties have found other means of passing the government dollars to parochial school students. But laundering the tax money through intermediate stops does not solve the most elementary problem: Government funds should not be used to aid religious schools.

The argument most frequently offered in support of the bus subsidies carries a self-serving tone and goes something like this: "My family pays taxes, too, and we're entitled to the same benefits as everyone else."

Absolutely right. Every child is entitled to participate in the public school system our tax dollars support. Every family has the choice to send their children to other schools, but that doesn't mean they are somehow being

cheated on benefits derived from taxes paid.

All citizens pay taxes to support government services they don't use. Following the logic of the bus-subsidy supporters, senior citizens and anyone else without children in school should be entitled to a tax rebate because they don't make use of the public schools and school-bus transportation.

That's a common-sense rebuttal to one aspect of the debate. But the more fundamental point is that religious schools ought to be the first to abhor government funding of their activities.

When government funds anything, government rightly attempts to control it. Governments have no financial subsidies that come without strings attached. This may not be obvious on the first bus ride or even on the second, but in time it will become as clear as the odor of stale gym bags on a hot afternoon bus ride.

Religious instruction is best done in an environment free of any opportunity for government coercion.

Kentucky's state and county governments have no business being in the business of subsidizing transportation for parochial school students. And Kentucky's religious organizations that attempt to do God's business through education have no business seeking government bus subsidies.

— Mark Wingfield

Christ and culture

A Nigerian told of a city boy who came to evangelize one of the villages. He brought bottled water and fast food from the city.

When invited to preach the gospel to the village chief, someone ran up and said, "Do not listen to him. He does not drink our water, or eat our food." The chief angrily sent the evangelist away.

But the next week he did listen to the one who came and ate their food and drank their water.

What lesson do we learn from this? If one is to preach the gospel in a foreign culture, identification with that culture is basic. The prophet Ezekiel learned this many centuries ago when he said, "I sat where they sat."

A Tanzanian told of how understanding one's culture can also help

communicate the gospel. For example, in the tribe he comes from the idea of forgiveness and community are intimately related. If someone kills a person, there needs to be sacrifice of a cow to bring forgiveness, and the sacrifice is needed to bring the wayward person back into the community. The pastor said as Christian witnesses we

need to tell the story that each of us are isolated and excluded from the family of God because of our sins, but God has provided the forgiveness and sacrifice to bring us back to the community through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is an example of how culture helps communicate the gospel.

There also are hindrances to the gospel in all cultures. A pastor from Uganda was proud of his tribe, but its economy was based upon their producing the best beer in the country.

Sitting around the fire, the community enjoyed their beer and the somewhat intoxicated feeling the beer gave, not the drunkenness, he emphasized. When Baptists witness and tell them it is wrong to drink beer, then the people say, "Oh, our culture would be destroyed. We could never become Baptists! And we earn our whole livelihood from this cash crop. What will we do?"

These are real questions which have implications for evangelism. Evangelism has not only individual but social consequences.

Every Baptist, every Christian must take seriously the culture in which they live if they are to effectively communicate the gospel. Sometimes we must condemn, sometimes affirm, but in Christ culture must always be transformed and redeemed.

Denton Lotz
Baptist World Alliance

COMMENTARY

Does the Bible allow a woman as a senior pastor?

"The standard prooftexts against a woman's spiritual authority as pastor simply do not apply to the women of the Bible."

YES

By Mary Zimmer

In the heated debate on this subject there are two basic issues that need to be clarified and a number of biblical characters whose witness should be heeded.

The issue about women as pastors is the issue of pastors as holder of spiritual authority. One evidence for the granting of spiritual authority is God's call and the gifts of the person announcing a call to ministry. Another is "what the Bible says."

But a second issue is what parts of the Bible are used to determine what the Bible says on the subject of authority. On women in the pastorate, only a total of three verses out of the entire Bible are used to support the answer of "no" to spiritual authority of women as pastors. These three verses are well-known enough by now that the buzzwords "no authority," "silence" and "headship" are familiar to nearly everyone.

On such an important and divisive subject, more of the whole biblical authority ought to be considered as God's word for the church today.

There are a number of characters and stories which have been left out of the discussion. Those people are the women of the Bible, and they ought to be considered crucial witnesses for any church's decision-making process on the issue.

In point of fact, the standard

prooftexts against a woman's spiritual authority as pastor simply do not apply to the women of the Bible. The question is, if these soundbite prooftexts do not apply to the women of the Bible, why should they apply to women in the church today?

In reference to a husband's headship over a wife, neither Abraham nor Elkanah have headship over their wives, Sarah and Hannah. For Sarah tells Abraham what to do about Hagar and Hannah tells Elkanah what she will do about Samuel. Hannah also does not keep silence in the temple, and she defies the priest who accuses her of drunkenness. Rebecca determines who will have Isaac's blessing, not Isaac himself. Abigail defies her husband's will in order to make peace with King David.

For examples of spiritual authority, read and study the stories of Huldah and Deborah, as well as those of the other nine women referred to as prophets in the Bible, the closest role to preacher in our churches today. Elizabeth is described as "filled with the Holy Spirit," functions as a priest and blesses Mary in the name of the Lord.

Perhaps in this debate, as the "Baptist Faith and Message" states, we should interpret the Bible through the life and ministry of Jesus. Women traveled as disciples with Jesus contrary to all social

rules, the Samaritan woman evangelized her community, and Mary Magdalene was the only person sent by the risen Christ to tell the news of resurrection. Jesus never limited the ministry of women to any list of roles by his teaching or practice.

There is overwhelming evidence that Paul supported the leadership of women in the early church despite the sentences in the epistles. Along with Aquila, Priscilla traveled on a missionary journey with Paul and led Apollo to the "right teaching." Paul commends Phoebe and eight other women leaders in the church at Rome. If all the women commended by Paul in his letters served only in silence and submission, how could they become church leaders?

A serious, thorough, open-minded and open-hearted study of the whole Bible can only lead to the understanding that the biblical examples of women's spiritual authority overwhelm the assertion of only three sentences standardly used as soundbite prooftexts against women having the spiritual authority of pastors.

If we believe the Bible is the authority of Baptist faith and practice, then we must read and follow the whole Bible, not just the verses which support what is familiar.

The conflict over the issue of women as pastors is not mostly a matter of women refusing to recognize

the authority of Scripture. Women who acknowledge the call of God to the pastorate are actually following the witness of the women leaders of the Bible. The conflict today is mostly a matter of churches attempting to limit the authority of God to call women as apostles of the gospel of Jesus Christ now.

I encourage every Baptist to be a Baptist. Read your whole Bible and practice priesthood of the believer by making up your own mind under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

References: Abigail, 1 Samuel 25:2-43, 30:1-18; Miriam, Exodus 15:20-21; Anna, Luke 2:36-38; Nympha, Colossians 4:15; Deborah, Judges 4-5; Phoebe, Romans 16:20; Elizabeth, Luke 1:5-61; Priscilla, Acts 18:1-3; Hannah, 1 Samuel 1:2-21, Rebekah, Genesis 27:1-46; Huldah, 2 Kings 22:14-20; Sarah, Genesis 16:1-9, 21:1-12; Joanna, Luke 24:1-12, 22-24; Sarah, Genesis 16:1-9; Junia, Romans 16:15; Isaiah's wife, Isaiah 8:3-4; Susanna, Luke 8:3; Mary Magdalene, Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-11, Luke 24:1-11, 22-24, John 19:25-27, 20:1-2; Daughters of Phillip, Acts 21:8-9.

Mary Zimmer, a member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, is past president of Baptist Women in Ministry and is author of "Sister Images: Guided Meditations from the Stories of Biblical Women."

"The problem is not man's difficulty in understanding what the Bible declares. The problem is a defiant and subjective refusal to obey the word."

NO

By Bill Hall

The New Testament does not legitimize women to be the ordained leaders of the church.

To those who view the holy Scriptures as God's inspired truth "without error" applicable to all issues at all times under all conditions, the matter is settled. God has spoken. His revealed truth has been written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We have his word.

The one and only basis for the position I represent is the absolute, unchanging authority of the word of God. Every word in the New Testament that addresses the issue is uniform, clear and uncompromising. A child of kindergarten age can understand all that is revealed on the subject. The problem is not man's difficulty in understanding what the Bible declares. The problem is a defiant and subjective refusal to obey the word.

The view I am articulating does not involve a superior/inferior configuration of the two sexes. God has created man and woman with equal worth, but with unique roles, distinct assignments and differing responsibilities. God's blessing always rests upon submission to his order and obedience to his plan.

What is God's established order in the New Testament church?

The case is stated: 1 Timothy 2:11-3:13, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. The last part of the Timothy passage flows from chapter two into chapter three without interruption. There were no chapter divisions in the original text. The entire discussion relates to church leadership. Note the words in 1 Timothy 3:1, "This is a true saying ..." It is God-inspired truth then and God-inspired truth now. Read it for yourself.

What are some objections to the biblical position? They would say, "Paul's cultural setting is not the same as ours." Please consider that Paul wrote at least 4,000 years after God first addressed this issue (Genesis 3:16). Many cultural milieus came and went between Adam's and Paul's, yet God's order remained unchanged. It is a tragic mistake to judge the Bible by a culture instead of judging a culture by the Bible.

Others object on the basis of a perceived divergency between Paul and Jesus. This is a tissue of fiction and runs close to blasphemy. The Lord Jesus practiced what Paul taught. The original disciples were all men, hand-chosen by the Lord. The apostolic band was all men. The original church leadership in Jerusalem was all male.

Some ask, "What about a fine



woman claiming that God has called her into the pastoral

ministry?"

No one, regardless of a sincere feeling, is called to a specific assignment contrary to God's revealed word. The claim of this hypothetical woman is purely subjective. Right at this point is the major difference between the two views appearing on this page. The Bible is a body of objective truth. It is the sole basis upon which faith can operate in obedience to God. When not viewed as objective truth, one can feel justified in making subjective interpretations of its statements.

Some object, "The churches are denying women their rights by withholding access to ordination and pastoral ministry." They continue, "The world is changing, and it's time for the church to catch up."

Well pardon me, but I did not know that the church is to "catch up" with the world. I've been of the conviction that the believer is to "be not conformed to the world" (Romans 12:2). Since 1963, when feminist leader Betty Friedan published her book, "The Feminist Mystique," the battle for "women's rights" has touched virtually every aspect of national life. Now it is a raging controversy in church life.

Are women underprivileged and

discriminated against by being denied certain leadership positions in the church? Is the denial of ordination a matter of prejudice against women, or is it a matter of submission to the will and word of God? We believe a woman's truest dignity and greatest freedom is in finding and doing the will of God.

It is freely acknowledged that women often outstrip male leaders in gifts and abilities. But as Elizabeth Eliot states, "Positions of leadership in the church are not rewards for competence." The ordained office of pastor is not a seal of superiority; it is a mantle of responsibility. Christian satisfaction comes not from titles or position, but from obedience to God.

The Apostle Paul, contrary to the views of some, was a champion of women's rights. He wrote respectfully and affectionately of Phoebe (Romans 16:1), Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis, who "did labor much for the Lord" (Romans 16:12). He speaks of Euodius and Syntyche, as "fellow workers in the Lord" (Philippians 4:2-3). Priscilla is warmly commended.

The world has its ideas about who is to lead the church. It waves banners of "equal rights" and equal access to leadership. But the world does not know, or obey, God. Let's do God's business in God's way.

Bill Hall is pastor emeritus of Gethsemane Baptist Church in Danville

RESOURCES

Sites, topics abound for Kentucky Baptist church retreats

Continued from page 1

■ "A Guide to Retreat," readings and meditation for pastors published by Abingdon Press.

There also are dozens of facilities available to churches (see chart below).

Besides Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek, the two state Baptist camps, nine Baptist associations operate Baptist camps across the state.

Two retreat centers that specialize in marriage enrichment weekends are operated by Southern Baptists in Kentucky, and there are 15 state parks with conference centers, lodges, cottages, marinas and numerous recreational outlets. One KBC school, Cumberland College,

has a lodge available for church groups.

Other religious groups across the state also offer their retreat facilities to Baptist groups.

The accommodations available for a church retreat run the gamut—from the modern facilities of Cumberland Lodge down to the \$2-per-night tents at Laurel Lake Camp, just south of Corbin.

For the cost-conscious, some associational camps don't offer meals, or they allow groups to bring their own food.

That can make the difference in

being able to hold a retreat, according to Vernon Cole, director of the KBC's church growth and administration division. "Money seems to be a big issue these days."

But if groups opt for the rustic as a way of trimming expenses, Miller suggests participants avoid cooking, cleaning and other chores. Individuals on a retreat should spend their time in study, meditation, dialogue and fellowship, he said.

"You also want a place that is somewhat pastoral or removed from a normal setting," he said. "A place where you can walk or sit and view

something other than trucks going down the road."

A few other tips offered by camp directors:

■ Most camps only provide facilities. Don't expect them to do the programming.

■ While it isn't necessary to plan every minute on most retreats, children's retreats require enough activities to keep the youngsters interested.

■ If a year-round camp is available, winter retreats are easier to schedule because demand is lower.

■ If you come expecting to learn and draw closer to God, you will probably have a better experience.

A church leader's guide to **Retreats!**

DIRECTORY OF BAPTIST-RELATED RETREAT FACILITIES

■ **Cedarmore Baptist Assembly**, owned by Kentucky Baptist Convention. Contact director Harold Barnes, (502) 747-8911. *Open:* February through November. *Size:* 1,400 acres. *Location:* About 40 miles northeast of Louisville. Take I-64 to exit 43, then Ky. 395 north and follow signs. *Capacity:* 600 overall, 96 in main lodge. *Costs:* Boone Lodge, two people per room, \$36.50 per person per day, including three meals. Motels, \$27; youth dorms, \$22.50. Prices vary for private rooms and children 2-8. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, ping pong, frisbee golf, horseshoes, basketball and volleyball courts, softball diamond, soccer field, track, hiking trails.

■ **Jonathan Creek Baptist Assembly**, owned by Kentucky Baptist Convention. Contact director Deward Hurst, (502) 354-8355. *Open:* February through November. *Size:* 125 acres. *Location:* On Kentucky Lake northwest of Murray, on Ky. 68 about 13 miles east of Purchase Parkway. *Capacity:* 132 in lodge, 116 in dormitory. *Costs:* Motel, February through April, \$30 per person; May through November, \$36.50 per person; includes three meals. Linens provided, deduct \$3 per person if you bring linens. Prices vary for private rooms, children and infants. Dormitory: March through November, \$21.50 per person, no linens provided. *Amenities:* Recreational facilities, fishing, chapel, conference rooms, fellowship hall (available with piano and large screen TV and VCR).

■ **Boone's Creek Baptist Camp**, owned by Boone's Creek Association. Contact Mack Pressley, director of missions, (606) 744-0037. *Open:* May through October. *Size:* 63 acres. *Location:* *Capacity:* Cottage space for 104, meal service for 120. *Costs:* Lodging \$5 per night per person. Meals are \$2.50 for breakfast, \$3 for lunch and \$3.25 for dinner. No linens furnished. Groups must guarantee 30 people. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, chapel-conference center, softball field, volleyball and basketball courts, campfire area, fishing, hiking trails. Gymnasium for ball games costs an extra \$30. Skating is \$1.75 per person, minimum of 30 skaters.

■ **Bullitsburg Baptist Assembly**, owned by Northern Kentucky Association. Contact Susan Bradley, camp director, (606) 727-6522. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 137 acres. *Location:* Just north of I-275, take Petersburg exit 11, turn left and go one mile to Baptist Camp Drive. *Capacity:* 60 in six heated cabins. *Costs:* (non-association church groups) Lodge rooms are \$8 to \$11 per person first night, \$6 to \$9 second night, varying by size

of group. Cabins are \$6 to \$8 first night, \$5 to \$7 second night. No linens provided. Additional charges for multi-purpose building and picnic shelter. Meals start at \$2.25 per person for breakfast, \$3.50 for lunch and \$5.50 for dinner. Deposit of \$50 to \$75 required, depending on facilities reserved. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, recreation area (volleyball, basketball, etc.), ball field, hiking trails, playground, prayer garden.

■ **Camp Joy**, owned by Southern Region Association. Contact Stan Hillman, camp manager, (502) 597-3213. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 40 acres. *Location:* 30 miles northeast of Bowling Green, just west of Mammoth Cave State Park. *Capacity:* 150 total in two dormitories (bunk beds) and conference center. During winter, only have heated accommodations for 40. *Costs:* \$18 per person per day, including three meals. Deposit of \$200 required. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, volleyball and basketball courts, playing field for softball or soccer, hiking trails, "Heaven's Keyhole" cave with seating for 150.

■ **Howard Memorial Camp**, owned by Upper Cumberland Association. Contact Chris Jones, chairman of association camp committee, (606) 837-2748 (after 3 p.m. weekdays). *Open:* April 1 to Oct. 15. *Size:* 85 acres. *Location:* Five miles north of Harlan off U.S. Rt. 119 at Wallin's Creek. *Capacity:* 75 in eight cabins. *Costs:* (non-association groups) \$2.50 per person per day. No linens or food service provided. *Amenities:* Gymnasium, volleyball, recreation field, fishing, small children's hiking trail.

■ **Hudgins Hill Camp**, owned by Greenup Association. Contact association office, (606) 329-2125. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 15 acres. *Location:* Near Grayson, take I-64 to Grayson exit 172, turn south on Ky. 7 and go about two miles to Ky. 1661, turn right. *Capacity:* 125 in two cabins and two buildings. *Costs:* \$4 per person per day, \$50 refundable deposit required. No food service generally provided, but kitchen facilities available. *Amenities:* Basketball court, ball fields, marked trails.

■ **Laurel Lake Camp**, operated by six associations in southern Kentucky. Contact Patrick Callahan, camp manager, (606) 528-3522. *Open:* April 1 until late November. *Size:* 140 acres. *Location:* Singing Hill Road, about 12 miles from Corbin, south off I-75. *Capacity:* 80 to 100 in five dormitories, plus 100 for tent camping. *Costs:* Lodging and

three meals, \$16 per day per person. If groups provide their own food, lodging is \$5 per day. Tent camping also available (no hookups) for \$2 per person. Deposit of \$100 required for retreats. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, volleyball, horseshoes, softball field, archery, hiking trails. Also, recreational vehicles available for \$5 per day.

■ **Camp Salem**, owned by Salem Association. Contact Joe Rosebush, director, (502) 828-8442. *Open:* April through October. *Size:* 140 acres. *Location:* About 50 miles east of Louisville, take U.S. 60 to Hill Grove Road (before Irvington), turn left and go about two miles. *Capacity:* 65 in seven cabins, dining room seats 100. *Costs:* Voluntary donations asked to help defray utilities and other costs; no food service provided. Dining room, kitchen facilities and two picnic shelters. *Amenities:* Large recreation area, running track, frisbee golf, horse shoes, badminton, basketball goal, hiking trail with Scripture signposts.

■ **Camp Schafer**, owned by Daviess/McLean Association. Contact Dan Hughes Jr., camp manager, (502) 927-6513 or (502) 927-8038. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 97 acres. *Location:* East of Owensboro near Pellville, off Ky. 2181. *Capacity:* 120 in six dormitories. *Costs:* Lodging \$8 per person per night. Breakfast \$3.50 per person, lunch \$4 and dinner \$4.50. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, volleyball, basketball, softball, horseshoes, fishing on two lakes, nature trails, canoeing.

■ **Shelby Baptist Camp**, operated by three Baptist churches in Shelbyville area. Contact Bill Taylor, (502) 722-9153. *Open:* March through October. *Size:* 25 acres. *Location:* 14 miles northwest of Simpsonville, on Hinkle Lane off Ky. 53. *Capacity:* 60 in two dormitories. *Costs:* Minimum charge \$50, depends on size of group. Meals available for groups of 25 or more. Groups can provide their own food if they want to lower costs. *Amenities:* Swimming pool, basketball and volleyball courts, hiking trails, softball diamond, horseshoes, field games.

■ **Cumberland Lodge**, owned by Cumberland College and managed by Marriott. For reservations and information, (606) 539-4100. *Open:* Year round. *Location:* 649 South 10 Street, Williamsburg, at Cumberland College, take exit 11 off I-75 in southern Kentucky. *Capacity:* 41 standard rooms, 2 single rooms, 2 handicap, 4 deluxe suites and 1 mini-suite. *Costs:* Tour package rates vary from \$72.80 per day for single room to

\$132.72 for triple, which includes breakfast, dinner and admission to Cumberland Museum. Standard room rates \$59 per day single occupancy, \$64 double. Conference room packages range from \$125 to \$300 day, or \$500 for main lobby, with food service earning credits on room rental. Buffets available for conferences. Advance deposit required to hold space. *Amenities:* Civic Center across street holds 300. The lodge is close to Cumberland Falls, Big South Fork State Park, Laurel Lake, Cumberland Gap National Park.

■ **The Plantings Christian Retreat Center**, privately owned. Contact directors Jim and Jo Ann Markham, (502) 255-7676. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 81 acres. *Location:* On Ky. 754 one mile from U.S. 42, approximately 30 miles northeast of Louisville. Accessible from I-71. *Capacity:* Up to 30 for overnight accommodations, 40 in dining room. Marriage retreats usually limited to six couples. *Costs:* If Plantings staff leads retreat, \$95 per couple for one night's lodging and three meals; \$85 each additional night, 3-6 couples. Groups of 6-30 people, \$45 per person and \$40 each additional night. When groups provide their own leadership, rates are \$14 less per couple and \$7 less per person for groups. Registration deposit of \$20 per person required, \$300 minimum to hold the date, applied to retreat cost. *Amenities:* Retreat center is approximately 5,000 square feet, with ping pong and pool tables in recreation room. Outdoor walking trails, small fishing lake, low ropes course.

■ **cleftRock Retreat Center**, privately owned. Contact directors Randy and Kathy Corry, (800) 719-0600. For questions on marriage retreats, call (606) 256-2469. *Open:* Year round. *Size:* 425 acres. *Location:* About 15 miles from Mount Vernon (exit 62 off I-75) via Ky. 1249 and cleftRock Road. *Capacity:* 46 in four fully-furnished retreat houses and two duplex cabins. *Costs:* Marriage weekend retreats, \$150 food and lodging per couple, \$50 deposit required. Other retreats, lodging ranges from \$18 per night for a single to \$52 for 4-8 member family (10 percent discount on weekdays); meals are \$18 per person and half-price for children ages 1-10. Deposit of \$10 per person required. *Amenities:* Recreation adventure course, hiking/bicycling trails, basketball and volleyball courts, horseshoes, ping pong, picnic shelter, guided walks to view cliffs, trees and wildflowers. Canoeing and fishing on nearby Rockcastle River.

Two retreat centers, one vision: Strengthening families

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Couple learned a hand-y lesson at retreat

What seemed like a simple exercise proved to be the most meaningful one for Suzanne and Brian Mattson during their recent marriage enrichment experience at The Plantings Christian Retreat Center. Couples jotted down lists of things they wish their mother or father (the parent of the opposite sex) had done as they were growing up. Suzanne said she and her husband cried when they later read each other's notes and saw the remarkable similarities. They realized the nurturing they wish their parents had done more frequently is the same type of nurturing they need from each other, she explained. "I had been on a lot of retreats but never a marriage retreat," said Suzanne, a member of Smithfield Baptist Church in Campbellsburg. "This was time where we could talk about the things in our marriage we don't normally talk about. We could talk at leisure, as a loving couple." Her husband agreed. "It was a freeing time, not just fun," he said. "Compared to other retreats, you do a lot more searching of yourself and your marriage." He said the weekend also reinforced lessons gleaned from two Promise Keepers rallies he has attended in Indianapolis. Since he didn't become a Christian until 1990, his views of what a man should be and Christ's views were very different for a long time, he said. "The way God spoke to me was telling me to be patient and quiet and it would help me be spontaneous," Mattson said. "That's what Suzanne needs most from me. At times I need to let her talk and not always have the answers."

Though strangers thousands of miles apart, God gave two men the same vision: start a retreat center to focus on marriage and family enrichment.

Today The Plantings and cleftRock retreat centers are tangible evidence of those calls. And through their Southern Baptist mission work the paths of both founders have crossed.

"I'm probably the only Southern Baptist ordained to retreat ministry," said Jim Markham, who operates The Plantings with his wife, Jo Ann. The center is located in Bedford, about 30 miles northeast of Louisville.

"I believe God meant us to have this place for spiritual growth, not entertainment," Markham said. "If a youth pastor calls and says, 'We just want to have some fun for the weekend,' I tell them to go to a state park."

The Markhams' path to retreat ministry began at Louisville's Westport Road Baptist Church, where they ministered to youth in various capacities.

That included taking groups of six to 12 camping, where they realized what could be accomplished in a remote setting. Watching rebellious teens make amazing turnarounds "caught our attention," Markham said.

So did the question a high school senior posed in Sunday school after Mrs. Markham talked about God turning around a man's life.

"Do you think God can change a

man's life when he comes home drunk and beats his wife and children?" he asked, a revelation of his own family life that shocked the Markhams.

"We could see that we needed to help build stronger marriages and homes that were positive places," Markham said.

"The Lord started waking me up every night for six years. I'd like awake for an hour or two, fantasizing about a retreat center for couples and doing family counseling with adults and teens."

Finally, he took a leap of faith, quitting his bank job. Taking such a drastic step after 26 years with the company and rising to manager of data processing, several friends suggested his wife commit him to a mental institution, he said.

Many years passed before they arrived in Bedford. In the interim they served in a variety of positions, including directing family ministries for Detroit's Baptist association and working as Mission Service Corps volunteers in Michigan.

Open year round, The Plantings hosts 25 to 30 retreats a year, although Markham hopes to increase that to 40. While focusing on marriage enrichment, the center hosts other sessions, such as for women, youth and prayer retreats.

"We're not certified counselors and don't claim to be, but the Lord keeps sending us people," Markham

said, explaining they receive oversight and assistance from Jon Rainbow, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"We have lots of opportunities to minister here; many we can't talk about because they're private. This is time for people to get away from the media. They can think and deal with issues and come to a solution."

Like those detractors who questioned Markham's sanity, Eddie Fields wondered what had happened when her husband told her, "We're supposed to leave and build a retreat center for the body of Christ."

At that time, 1972, Eddie and Bob Fields had been serving as missionaries in Israel for 10 years. She intended forever to live out her call to foreign missions there, she explained.

Reluctantly, she followed her husband to Georgetown College, where he worked as dean of religious life for two years while organizing cleftRock center and locating property. The 25-acre site on top of a ridge is located adjacent to the Daniel Boone National Forest in the southern part of the state.

"The Lord brought it into being," Mrs. Fields said, recalling how First Baptist Church of London presented the first major love gift of \$1,000. Thanks to a later \$60,000 donation, they built a lodge in the late 1970s.

In addition, other missionaries

purchased small lots there for \$2,500 and built homes, which cleftRock rented out for the first marriage enrichment weekends.

Three couples helped the Fields start the ministry: E.B. and Sylvia Smith of Lexington, and Williamsburg couples Milton and Marty Murphy and Wayne and Rita Moore.

For many years these families and a working board of directors have supported and encouraged cleftRock, Mrs. Fields said.

After 12 years, the Fields stepped down as directors and returned to the mission field in 1987, where they stayed until 1994. Now they live in the London area and again work with cleftRock.

With the support of former Arizona residents Randy and Kathy Corry, newly-elected directors of cleftRock, the Fields will continue to lead marriage enrichment retreats this year.

"Working with couples is very special," Mrs. Fields said. "We never have an event that someone doesn't say, 'This is life-giving to our marriage.' We model it, but they do it. We let them know we aren't perfect, which takes the pressure off."

"We think so much good can happen when people come away from their settings," she explained. "People need to be able to come apart and have their Bible out, hear God speak and let the Holy Spirit convict them when they're wrong and affirm them when they're on track."

A church leader's guide to **Retreats!**

Getting the most of every asset

By Robin Oldham
Director, Annual Giving

Several weeks ago, Baptist Healthcare Foundation was informed that a longtime friend of Baptist Healthcare had passed away.

In life, this thoughtful lady had shown her love for and commitment to her family, church, community and to the Baptist hospital in her city.

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The great thing about wise planning and charitable giving is that they do not require huge fortunes to be beneficial to the donor and to recipients. Everyone can and should take time to plan.

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We at Baptist Healthcare Foundation want to help people get the most out of every asset while assisting them and the institutions they love. Tax laws provide significant incentives for charitable giving. Quite often such laws allow immediate tax deductions, waiver of capital gains tax, improvement in spendable income and reduced estate taxes.

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Robin Oldham

Because of these and other benefits resulting from wise planning, you may be able to help your family and others far more than you thought possible.

If you have any questions about the importance of planning or would like information about an upcoming as-

set protection seminar presented by Baptist Healthcare Foundation, please contact our office. Our services are offered to you at no cost or obligation.

Any questions or comments concerning this article, Baptist Healthcare System or Baptist Healthcare Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., president of Baptist Healthcare Foundation, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207. (502) 896-5003 or (800) 224-4745.

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FINANCIAL FORUM

Basic rules for the church treasurer, part 2

By Doug Strader

A church holds a sacred trust in properly handling and distributing members' gifts. This has always been true, but it is more imperative today than ever. Churches have experienced some very traumatic events because someone abused that sacred trust.

The church treasurer should be given written evidence of all money received and deposited into church accounts. It is a good policy for someone other than the treasurer to count and deposit the money.

Money received during Sunday services should be counted by a committee of at least three, and placed immediately in the bank's night depository. Some churches put the uncounted money in the night depository. On Monday morning, the counting committee goes to the bank, counts the money and then deposits it. A duplicate of the deposit slip is given to the treasurer. The treasurer can verify the amount with the bank.

Any other gifts received in the mail or brought to the church office should be handled the same way. The treasurer must have this information in order to report to the church each month.

The treasurer should keep the financial records in accordance with the guidelines of the church. All receipts are to be reported in appropriate categories. If a church does not have a financial secretary, the treasurer should serve in this capacity or have the church designate someone.

The treasurer has the authority to disperse funds from the budget as adopted by the church. When bills/statements are received as due they should be paid, but the treasurer does not have the authority to pay non-budget items unless instructed by the church.

If receipts are not sufficient to pay all bills due, the treasurer should consult church guidelines or ask the stewardship committee to give guidelines.

All distributions should be made by check and require a co-signature along with the treasurer.

The treasurer is to give a simple written report each month to the stewardship committee and then to the entire congregation. The entire church should be informed each month that their gifts are being distributed in accordance with the church budget.

Doug Strader is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department

Ruling could restore Utah abortion limits

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A federal appeals court erred when it threw out all of a Utah abortion law instead of just the parts that were found unconstitutional, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a 5-4 unsigned opinion June 16.

In 1991, Utah's legislature enacted regulations permitting abortions during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy for only five reasons: to save the life of the pregnant woman, in pregnancies resulting from rape and incest, to pre-

vent "grave damage" to the pregnant woman's health and to prevent the birth of a child that would be born with "grave defects." For pregnancies of more than 20 weeks, the law eliminated the exceptions for rape and incest.

Citing Supreme Court precedent, a federal district court ruled that the regulations on abortion during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy were unconstitutional but the restrictions after 20 weeks could be enforced.

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Ap-

peals disagreed. It held that the part of Utah's law governing mid- and late-term abortions could not be severed from the sections regulating abortions before the fetus reaches the point at which it could survive outside the womb.

In its opinion, the Supreme Court said the Utah legislature plainly intended that any sections of its law not invalidated should be enforced.

The high court's action returns the case to the appeals court.

Marriage bill could see vote in House soon

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A bill that would allow states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages occurring in other states has cleared a committee in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The House Judiciary Committee approved the Defense of Marriage Act June 12 by a vote of 20-10. The bill, sparked by an attempt to legalize same-sex marriages in Hawaii, seeks to "define and protect the institution of marriage," supporters say.

Sponsored by Rep. Bob Barr, R-Ga., the bill defines marriage as "only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife."

In 1993, Hawaii's Supreme Court ruled that denying marriage licenses to gay couples may violate the state's constitution. The court sent the case back to the trial level and demanded the government show "compelling" reason for upholding the ban.

The case is now on appeal, but most observers expect a court to rule this fall that gay marriages are permissible in Hawaii. The U.S. Constitution's "full-faith-and-credit" clause in Article IV would require every other state to recognize those unions.

Conservative groups fear gays in other states will flock to Hawaii to get married and then demand the unions be recognized back home.

"Gay-rights lawyers have made plain their intention to invoke the full-faith-and-credit clause to persuade judges in the other 49 states to ignore the public policy of those states and to recognize a Hawaiian same-sex marriage license," said Rep. Charles Canady, R-Fla.

Supporters of the House bill call it an "important step toward preserving the family." Defining marriage is important, they argue, to ensure that benefits for married couples related to immigration, health insurance and federal income tax withholding not be extended to same-sex partners.

Opponents of the bill say it is being pushed to score political points for the upcoming elections. President Clinton has said he will sign the bill if it only seeks to allow states the right to refuse same-sex marriages that occurred in other states and goes no further in limiting gay rights.

A spokeswoman for Barr said she expects the full House to vote on the bill in a few weeks.

Thomas returns to Catholic roots

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, a lapsed Roman Catholic for the last 25 years, has returned to the Catholic Church, the Washington Times reported June 14.

The Times said that Thomas, speaking at his 25-year reunion at Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass., reported that he took his "first Communion" in St. Joseph's Chapel on the campus.

Thomas' account of his return to the faith of his childhood "stunned the audience," the newspaper quoted one audience member as saying.

In his 20-minute talk, Thomas said he left the Catholic Church after confronting racism in the denomination in the 1960s.

He said his return to Catholicism has been gradual and cited three former Holy Cross classmates who helped him on the way.

There are now three Roman Catholic justices on the Supreme Court. Justices Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy are Catholic. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer are Jewish. The remaining four justices are Protestant.

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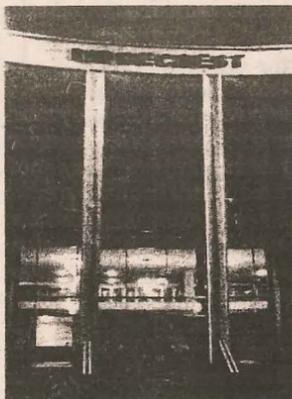
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PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with Russia, Boston and Utah-Idaho:

- Clay and Connie Cartwright, missionaries to Tambov, Russia, as they return to the United States for a month's vacation.
- Alexey Nikitkov, assistant to Lee and Sarah Bivins in St. Petersburg, Russia.
- Long-term volunteers needed to assist churches in the Greater Boston Baptist Association.
- New ministries being planned by Greater Boston Baptist Association.
- The staff of Utah-Idaho Baptist Convention. Many have more than one job assignment in order to meet the needs of the churches.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **FRANKFORT**—Wallace Kent, pastor at Crestwood Church for 25 years, announced his retirement effective July 15. He will reside in Frankfort and will be available for supply and interim pastorates.

■ **LAWRENCEBURG**—First Church called David Preston as minister of youth. He began his new ministry June 1. Also, Kelly Thompson was called as church administrator.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Robin Roberts, pastor at Baxter Avenue Church, was

ordained to the gospel ministry at Smithfield Church.

Jennie Lamb resigned as organist at Broadway Church effective Sept. 1.

■ **MONTICELLO**—Mount Zion Church called John McPheron as pastor. McPheron previously was pastor at Stamping Ground Church. He will begin his new ministry July 7.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church ordained Jeff Stewart as deacon June 23.

■ **RICHMOND**—Rosedale Church called Gordon Lunceford as associate pastor with emphasis in youth and education. Lunceford previously was minister to youth and children at First Church in Pine Bluff, Ark. He will begin his new ministry Aug. 1.

■ **SOMERSET**—Bethany Church ordained Pastor Alan Dodson to the gospel ministry June 22.

Curtis Keith, 53, pastor of New Enterprise Church died May 19. He is survived by his wife, Diane, two daughters and three grandchildren.

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Thanks again, Kentucky Baptists

One year ago this week, I thanked Kentucky Baptists for their support of the first Barkley Moore Offering.

Again this year it appears Kentucky Baptists have chosen to bless us financially. The early reports are very good. At this time last year we had only heard from about 10 or 12 churches. Already this year four dozen or so churches have contributed, and only one had a smaller offering than last year. The rest had substantial increases.

We do not know the total amount received in 1995, because many individuals and churches did not mark their contributions for the Barkley Moore Offering. Since we had not received financial support from those churches and individuals before, we can only presume their gifts were in response to the offering. The total amount designated for the Barkley Moore Offering last year was about \$135,000. We feel sure that about another \$20,000 or so was in response to the offering but not designated as such.

At this time we are running about 37 percent ahead of last year! This means we could receive well over \$200,000.

We feel we did a much better job of getting the offering materials out this year. The materials were sent a week or so sooner, giving each church and pastor time to review them. This also gave time for each church to decide if they wanted to participate in the offering.

We also did a better job of getting the proper amount of materials to each church. It is not an easy task deciding how much information to send to each of the 2,500 churches.

We were also blessed with a lot of volunteer help this year in counting, sorting, packaging and mailing the materials. We would never have got-

ten the information together and mailed in a timely manner if it had not been for the help of many volunteers. Several hundred volunteer hours were put into getting the materials together. I want to say thanks again to all of those who helped.

And, thanks again to Kentucky Baptists for once more making it possible for Oneida to provide the unique ministry we do. I have spoken at nearly a 100 churches during the past year. There were several churches I could not get to before the offering was taken, but I will be speaking in those

churches over the next several Sundays. We have spent more than \$100,000 the past few weeks to purchase materials for volunteers who have come so far this summer. The offering will not only pay for the supplies already purchased, but will help to supply materials for the volunteers here now and the many yet to come this summer. In some respects your investment has been nearly doubled. You have helped to provide money for materials, making it possible for several hundred volunteers to donate many thousands of hours of free labor. We

could never afford to pay for the services of these wonderful people. Those skilled plumbers, carpenters, painters, seamstresses, clerical workers, electricians, roofers, craft workers and many others have increased the value of your gifts.

In James A. Burns' book "The Crucible," our founder tells about his journey to Clay County and how this school came into being. Burns stated in the opening pages, "From a heart filled with gratitude, this book is dedicated to every friend of Oneida Institute, past, present and future." I say to all our friends past, present and future, thank you!

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Highview Baptist Church accepting resumes for a minister of music. Send information to: Staff Development Committee, Highview Baptist Church, 7711 Fegenbush Ln., Louisville, KY 40228.

FOR SALE: Conn 552 Theatre Organ, two manuals, foot pedals, extra pipe speakers, voices, features. \$1,200. (502) 267-9517.

TOUR: 10-day Holy Land tour plus Greece, departing Feb. 24, 1997, for only \$1,795. Call Jack R. Studie for a color brochure and more information at (502) 247-8331. Experience you can trust!

SEEKING: Meta Baptist Church is searching for a full-time minister of youth and music. If interested, send resume to: Meta Baptist Church, 8807 Meta Hwy., Pikeville, KY 41501. Pastor Ron Spurgeon.

SEEKING: Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati-area Baptist church expanding from part-time youth activities director to full-time minister of youth and children. Send resume to: Search Committee, c/o Jeff Hume, 9125 Clear Brook Ln., Covington, KY 41017.

SEEKING: Part-time youth leader. Providence Baptist Church is a growing country church and is seeking a youth minister. This is a great ministry opportunity for a seminary student or anyone else who is called to minister with youth. Paid position, office and weekend housing. Contact: Sherry Hurley, (502) 222-9859; Pastor Doug Boyd (502) 532-6321; or send resume to: Providence Baptist Church, RR3 Box 609, Campbellsburg, KY 40011.

FOR SALE: Two 12-week-old akc Alaskan Malamute female b/w puppies, \$200. (502) 785-4542.

NEEDED: Jewish-Christian PhD student going to Israel researching Messianic churches. Donate frequent-flyer miles. Tax deduction. Jeff Wasserman, (502) 327-9457.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for rural church in a central location between four small towns in south-central Kentucky. Please send resume to: Middleton Baptist Church, 9193 Russellville Rd., Franklin, KY 42134.

SEEKING: If interested in an interim or the full-time position as minister of music, please send resume to: Kaye Smith, First Baptist Church, 200 W. Lincoln Blvd., Hodgenville, KY 42748-1414. Fully graded music ministry with preschool, children, adult, senior adult and handbell choirs. (502) 358-3193.

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SEEKING: Minister of music/outreach for northern Kentucky SBC church. Call (606) 635-2444. Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 175 W. Clay Rd., Alexandria, KY 41001. Dr. Paul E. Broyles, pastor/teacher.

A pastor's influence

"I doubt if brother Ben Baird ever realized the influence he had on my life." Those words, spoken by a man baptized by the former Kentucky pastor, describe what most pastors experience.

Baird retired as pastor of First Baptist in Hazard. He and Velma built their dream home in London. He anticipated many years of fruitful ministry in the churches and as a teacher of pastoral ministries at Clear Creek. Cancer did not allow it to happen; he died in 1995.

While Baird was with Clear Creek, he often shared our needs with others and made me aware of individuals who might help us. It was his influence that encouraged a significant gift to our Child Development Center in 1992. I visited that donor couple last month and presented the Beyond 2001 Campaign needs. One part of the \$3.5 million goal is the construction of a new classroom building. I asked this family to consider a challenge gift of \$50,000 in memory of Baird. They asked me to wait a week for their response.

I received their call several days earlier than expected. He said, "When you described the campaign goals, I thought that was a lot of money and didn't see how we could do it. But when you talked about the

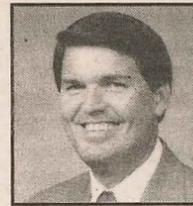
Bairds, it became a different issue. We have decided to make the challenge gift and will give the \$50,000 as others respond."

The husband told me of moving into the community where Baird was pastor. "I had decided not to attend church, but just sleep in on Sunday. Brother Baird visited me and didn't give up. He baptized me, and my wife also joined the church.

Some time later, Baird preached a sermon on tithing, and then sent every member a letter challenging us to begin tithing. My wife became convicted about it and thought we should also begin tithing. I disagreed and told her we couldn't pay our bills and tithe. To please her, I agreed that we would give \$25.00 a week. That was the beginning of our stewardship."

I believe the issue for us is not really how much money we make, but our obedient, Christian use of what we have. God enables us to do far more than we expect if we are faithful stewards with what he has entrusted to our care. Folks who have that kind of faith will help us reach the goal of Beyond 2001.

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. 40977

Abraham's cemetery the focus of battle over Hebron

By Elaine Ruth Fletcher
Religion News Service

"And Sarah died in Qiryat Arba, that is Hebron, in the land of Canaan ... and Abraham stood up from before his dead and spoke to the sons of Het, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you that I may bury my dead." Genesis 23: 1-5.

HEBRON, West Bank (RNS)—Thousands of years after the biblical patriarch Abraham purchased a family burial ground in this ancient Canaanite town, the "Cave of Machpelah"—or "Cave of the Patriarchs"—as it is often called—is probably the world's most bitterly disputed cemetery. It also is the religious soul of the modern-day Israeli-Arab battle for control of Hebron.

Jewish claims on the cemetery, and the Jewish homes and synagogues clustered near the site, have made the Israeli decision on whether to withdraw partially from Hebron such a loaded political and religious issue for newly elected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Yet if Abraham were alive today, he might be shocked and dismayed over the violent Jewish-Muslim political debate over the graveyard, which he purchased from the pagan Canaanite residents of Hebron in what the Bible describes as a model of peaceful exchange between peoples of different faiths:

"And Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land ... saying ... 'I pray thee, I will give thee the price of the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there ...'" according to Genesis 23:12-16. "Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, 'My lord, hearken to me: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that between me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead.'"

Tradition says Sarah and Abraham are buried in this place ("Machpelah" is an obscure Hebrew word for "pairs"). The couple's son Isaac and his wife, Rebecca, are believed buried there, along with their grandson Jacob and one of his wives, Leah. The cemetery was the first land acquisition by the nomadic Hebrew tribes in the land God had promised to Abraham's descendants.

As a result, Hebron is regarded as the second most important city to Jews after Jerusalem. Jewish communities have lived in the shadow of the Cave,

and pious Jews have made pilgrimages to the site, in an almost continuous chain extending back to biblical times.

Yet Muslim Arabs also see themselves as heirs to the Patriarch Abraham's legacy. They trace their lineage to Abraham's first son, Ishmael, who was born of Sarah's Egyptian servant Hagar. As latter-day descendants of Ishmael, Muslims also claim the Machpelah burial ground, which they call "Abraham's Mosque" or "Abraham's Holy Site."

Regardless of the dispute over heritage, both the Bible and Islamic traditions suggest that Abraham's first link to Hebron was not only the result of divine direction, but also part of a broader process that took place in early nomadic civilization.

"In human history, one of the most basic features of the transition from nomadic to sedentary life was the identification of a burial place," says Ze'ev Yavin, an Israeli archaeologist who has explored the Machpelah site.

"The Cave of Machpelah was part of the settlement process of the nomadic Hebrew tribes."

Islamic tradition, on the other hand, continued to place a slightly greater stress on Abraham's Bedouin-style wanderings.

As a shepherd who roamed the Negev Desert region around Beersheva, Abraham probably traveled north to the Hebron highlands regularly in the summertime to find relief from the heat. There he camped as a "respected guest" of the local Canaanite rulers, returning south in the winter, says Yunis Amr, a Palestinian professor of ancient Semitic languages who wrote a book on Abraham's Mosque.

After Sarah died and was buried in Hebron, Abraham's connection naturally deepened and he "began to come to the town from time to time to visit the holy grave," Amr says. Still, "Abraham came as a guest, not with a gun" he adds, referring to the weapons of present-day Jewish settlers.

Genesis 23:17 records: "And the field of Efron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field ... were made over to Abraham for a possession."

Today, this once pastoral field sits in the heart of Arab Hebron. And the reputed Cave of Machpelah has been covered for centuries by a massive stone-faced structure, probably built in the first century A.D. by the Roman-appointed King Herod.



Inside the walls, a rectangular basilica has been used over the centuries by Jews, Christians and Muslims as a place of pilgrimage and prayer, and renovated by a succession of Byzantine Christian and Muslim rulers.

The large mosque that now dominates the interior of the Herodian building is an impressive example of medieval Muslim art and architecture.

In 1980, with the permission of the mosque's Islamic caretakers, Yavin, the Israeli archaeologist, was accorded a rare glimpse at the legendary subterranean chambers hidden below the visible Herodian structure—chambers from which Jews and Christians had been barred for centuries.

Descending from a hidden opening in the stone floor of the mosque, he followed a corridor to a room. Below the room were two man-made caves typical of burial sites from the Middle Bronze Age between 1,800 and 2,000 B.C.—the period corresponding roughly to when Abraham was believed to have lived.

In one cave, Yavin recovered glass candlesticks and a ceramic jug dating to the Crusader era. A second, smaller cave contained pottery fragments dating to the early Israelite period, or Iron Age, of 900 B.C.

The archaeological findings, together with historical descriptions of the site, make it "clear there was a tra-

dition of Jewish pilgrimage to it from a very early era," says Yavin.

One of the most remarkable observations was that of the European Christian pilgrim Antoninos the Martyr in 586 A.D. He reported that "in the middle of the Cave of Machpelah there is a basilica of four pillars. From one side, the Christians enter and from the other side, the Jews ... and there gather a multitude of Jews from all over the country."

The Islamic conquest of Hebron in 638 A.D., however, was the catalyst for the gradual Islamic sanctification of the site and the surrounding city.

Tension has grown ever since, peaking in February 1994 when a prominent Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, massacred more than 30 Arab Muslim worshipers as they prostrated themselves for dawn prayers inside Abraham's Mosque. Following the massacre, the various courtyards and sanctuaries on the site have been strictly partitioned between Muslims and Jews—a partition bitterly opposed by both sides.

On a deeper level, differing attitudes toward worship in the Cave of Machpelah remain at the crux of a seemingly irreconcilable conflict between Hebron's 25,000 Muslims and 5,000 Jewish settlers who live in the ancient town and in the new suburb of Kiryat Arba.

DISPUTED CITY Tradition says Abraham and Sarah are buried in the "Cave of Machpelah," the religious soul of modern-day disputes for its host city Hebron. (Illustrator photo—David Rogers)

51 years after hanging, Bonhoeffer may be pardoned soon

MUNICH (RNS)—The German government may be about to pardon Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

The Lutheran Theologian was executed by the Nazis in 1945, and he is still listed under German law as guilty of high treason.

Reuters news agency last week quoted unnamed German legal sources as saying the pardon could come "this summer or fall."

If it does, it would follow the recent pardoning of a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Bernhard Lichtenberg, who died while in the Nazis' custody

after publicly praying for Jews and others persecuted by Adolf Hitler. That pardon came just prior to Pope John Paul II's recent visit to Germany. Lichtenberg was one of two priests beatified by the pope, the next to last step before being declared a saint in the Catholic Church.

Bonhoeffer was a leading anti-Nazi dissident who was arrested in 1943 after urging members of the German clergy to actively oppose Hitler. While in prison, Bonhoeffer—a key member of the anti-Nazi "Confessing Church" movement—wrote his best-known

book, "Prisoner of God—Letters and Papers from Prison."

After Nazi officials learned that Bonhoeffer had also been part of a failed plot to stage an anti-Hitler coup, he was sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. He was hanged in April 1945.

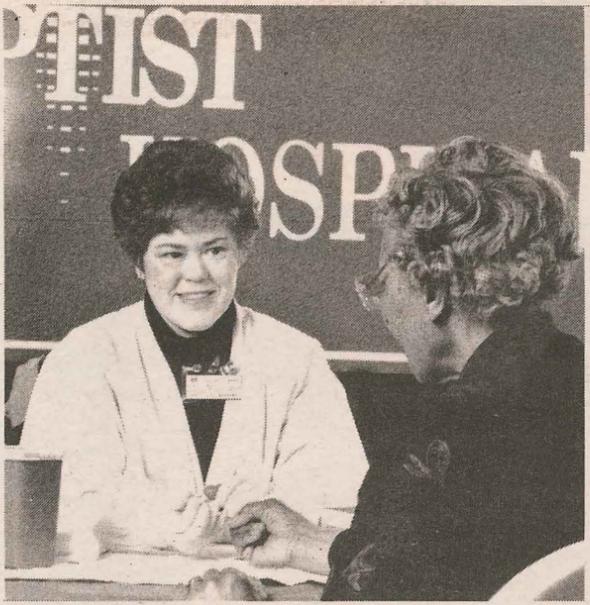
German politicians and church leaders have long urged the German government to officially pardon Bonhoeffer, arguing that he should be seen as a hero—not a criminal—for standing up to Hitler.

Earlier this year, a German Protes-

tant pastor formally asked the government to overturn Bonhoeffer's conviction.

In 1951, a Munich court ruled that Bonhoeffer's conviction was valid under the law that was in effect during the Nazi era. Because of that, the court ruled the conviction could not be overturned.

However, Ruediger Reiff, a spokesman for the Berlin justice ministry, recently said that "the public prosecutor has determined that the verdict was handed down for political reasons."



Baptist Healthcare System

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission Statement

The mission of Baptist Healthcare System is to continue our Christian heritage of service and to enhance the health of the people and communities we serve.

Vision Statement

The vision of Baptist Healthcare System is to be a Christian partner of choice in community-oriented, integrated health systems that set standards of excellence.

Values Statement

Baptist Healthcare System will live out its Christ-centered mission to others and achieve its vision guided by: integrity, excellence, respect, stewardship and collaboration.

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